

## Sweet Disposition

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## Sweet Disposition

by [loglady1980](#)

### Summary

Dream was obsessed with a boy on a bike.

The boy biked to and from school, lean muscle rhythmically pushing against pedals as he climbed hilly roads, letting go of the handlebars on his way down. He weaved through streets lined with fruit trees, whizzing past Dream's car at every red light. Sometimes he'd lift himself off the seat, bending forward ever so slightly so the stinging wind made his hair flutter and sweep backward. His shirt would ride up his back, exposing a small sliver of pale skin that Dream ached to touch—he wondered how soft it'd be, wondered if the boy would let him touch, and touch, and touch some more.

### Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

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he wondered how soft it'd be, wondered if the boy would let him touch, and touch, and touch some more.

Dream watched him every day—days when the boy wore jeans that were a little too baggy, hanging loose off his hips; and days when the boy wore shorts, exposing perpetually scraped knees from his downhill bicycle escapades.

He'd never admit it, but Dream started cracking his car windows a bit, hoping the boy would hear music flowing from his shitty speakers and strike up a conversation. *Sweet disposition, never too soon.*

He'd never admit it, but Dream drove a *little* recklessly to ensure they'd reach school at the same time, just so he could watch the boy make his way inside, shrinking into the masses. *Oh, reckless abandon.*

He'd never admit it, but Dream was rapidly growing infatuated with a complete stranger. *Like no one's watching you.*

It ached and bubbled and writhed within him, growing flowering gardens in his chest, vines shooting out from within his pounding heart and wrapping around his lungs. Pleasant, steady suffocation. Not a bad way to die.

Weeks went by, football practices came and went, mind-numbing house parties and preseason workouts, math tests and round-table literature discussions, but Dream never saw the bike boy in school. It seemed like the universe had limited him to just ten minutes a day of sunshine, always abruptly cut short by deft fingers locking the bike securely in place.

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"Dream, are you with us?"

"Yeah, sorry, Ms. Parker," he mutters, straightening up. Sapnap snickers, giving him a soft shove as their Lit teacher continues to drone on.

"As I was saying," she huffs, "we're going to be starting *The Age of Innocence* next week, so make sure everyone has their books. I won't be loaning out class copies—"

The door slams open.

*You.*

Dream drops his pencil, barely registering its absence as it clatters to the floor.

"May I help you?" Ms. Parker says sharply.

"Um, yes, I- I think I'm in this class now," comes the bike boy's voice. *British. Soft. Warm.* Dream runs a hand through his hair and *stares*.

"Oh! Switched schedules?" she asks. He nods hesitantly. "What's your name, dear? I need to add you to the attendance sheet."

*What's your name? What's your favorite color? Do you like cats? What's your favorite food? Do you need a ride home? Wanna watch my football games? Can I kiss you?*

"George," he murmurs, shifting around nervously. The class titters impatiently, casting apprehensive looks towards the boy. Dream wants to tell them to stop staring, that it's only his job

to look.

*George. George. George.* It feels sublime on Dream's tongue. He whispers it under his breath, staring intently at bike boy- *George*.

"Dream," Sapnap says. "Dream!"

"Yeah?"

"Pencil."

"Oh, thanks man," Dream sighs. When he looks up again, George is settling into the seat in front of Sapnap, twirling a pen between his fingers.

"Anyways!" Ms. Parker calls. "Age of Innocence next week. But for now, vocab quiz." Everyone groans as papers shuffle and pencil pouches are unzipped. George looks out the window. Dream looks at George.

*He has freckles*, his heart squeals. *Shut up*, his brain replies.

They start *The Age of Innocence* on Monday. George pulls out a dog-eared, well-annotated book from his backpack. Dream looks down at his new copy, spine relatively intact, untapped potential nestled within the pages. He wonders how many times George's read the book, if it's his favorite book, if he underlines passages that make his chest tighten. He wonders if George would read to him.

"Okay!" Ms. Parker exclaims, finishing setting up the desks in a sort of lopsided blob vaguely resembling a circle. "Time for our roundtable. I hope everyone did their reading for homework. Let's start with the first few chapters... We open at an opera, a rich backdrop for the beginning of the novel. Can anyone tell me the significance of this event?"

Nobody speaks.

Dream clears his throat before speaking, tossing a glance George's way. "I think it's because they want to establish the characters as rich. Very rich. And they all hang out together so the author can set the scene for us. Um- the author tells us their lifestyles and stuff."

He sees George crack a small smile out of the corner of his eye, and leans back with a self-satisfied smirk.

"Hmm. Good start. Anyone else?"

George raises a timid hand.

"George, we don't raise hands during the roundtable," Ms. Parker explains.

"Oh, right," he murmurs, shifting in his seat. "Er- anyway, the book opens on the opera not *only* because Wharton wants to display the opulent riches the main characters possess, but also because she wants the reader to know they're congregating like this despite constantly scrutinizing one another. Basically, they go to an event as a group—a family—an event that's meant to be judged, as all art is, but they just end up judging each other. It displays shallowness, lack of class, despite being of high social standing, if that makes sense."

*Fuck.*

The smile falls from Dream's face, and he dares an upwards glance to meet George's stare. He appears dazed for a moment, then winks at Dream playfully, dropping his head down to scribble something in the margins of his book.

Dream's heart stutters. He feels heat rising in his cheeks and prays it dies out. It doesn't.

"Very nice, George!" Ms. Parker beams. "Very good analysis."

George doesn't talk much for the rest of class, and Dream thanks God for the roundtable set up, thanks God for the perfect view of sharp cheekbones and gentle freckles, messy hair and pink lips. It's addictive. He's sure George catches him staring more than once, but somehow, he doesn't care.

Dream jogs up to him after class, straining to catch up as George strides through the hallway, effortlessly slipping through hordes of rushing students.

"Hi," he says, looking at his shoes as they walk, side by side, hands almost brushing.

"Hi," George replies with a grin.

"What do you have next?" Dream asks.

"Math."

"Me too."

"Cool."

They walk in silence, parting ways when they enter the math building—George offers Dream a courteous nod and ambles towards the stairs, taking them two at a time. Dream turns around and sprints across campus to the computer lab.

What George didn't know wouldn't hurt him.

It continues—every day for the next week, Dream and George silently make their way to the math building. Every day for the next week, Dream turns around and *runs* the second George is safely out of sight.

On Friday, Dream plucks up the courage to ask a question. Well, he makes a statement.

"You're British," he declares, fidgeting with the strings of his hoodie.

George looks startled, then glances up to Dream with an easy smile. "Sure am."

"Why?"

"Are you seriously asking me why I'm British?"

Dream groans internally, feeling his face buzz with embarrassment. *What the fuck was that?* "No- I mean- fuck- why are you *here*?"

The corner of George's mouth quirks ever-so-slightly. Dream represses thoughts of kissing the smile from his lips. "My dad's job. We moved."

"Damn, must be rough leaving before your senior year."

“Yeah, well. Change is nice sometimes.”

Flowers bloom in Dream’s chest, tickling his heart, and they continue in silence.

He starts appearing everywhere. Dream sees George reading the New York Times at lunch, and drops into a seat across from him, expecting a greeting. He doesn’t get one.

“You’re reading the New York Times,” he blurts.

“Oh,” George says, looking startled. Dream wants to die. “Hello.”

The paper ruffles as George writes something down. “Why are you reading the newspaper?” Dream presses, taking a swig of chocolate milk.

George laughs softly, a gentle tinkling that causes Dream’s lips to involuntarily curl into a smile. “I’m not reading. I’m doing the crossword,” he explains, pushing the paper forward with one hand.

“In pen?” Dream wonders aloud.

“Is there any other way to do it?”

Now it’s Dream’s turn to laugh, a short wheeze that George rolls his eyes at mischievously, returning to his crossword.

“Need help?” Dream offers, scrambling to extend the conversation.

George looks up again with an incredulous expression. “Yeah, alright then. Come on this side.”

Dream grins, running around the table to sit on George’s left.

George rummages through his backpack and produces another pen, placing it in front of Dream. “Here,” he mutters, “only write if you’re *absolutely* sure.”

“Got it,” Dream says, brow furrowing as they start working.

Five minutes pass. George squints in concentration, jotting down possible words in the margins. Dream watches with silent adoration, fixated on the way his pale fingers twist around the pen.

“Hmm,” George hums. “Letter-shaped bike securer. Five letters.”

Dream’s stomach turns. “I- I don’t know shit about bikes,” he mumbles, remembering strong legs, slivers of milky skin, fruit trees, and brown hair whipping in the wind.

George exhales softly, shaking his head. “U-lock.”

“U-lock?”

“U-L-O-C-K,” George spells out. “You lock your bike with ‘em. Put it right around the wheel.”

“Cool,” Dream whispers, reaching out to fill in the squares. George reaches out at the same time.

Their hands collide.

“Uh,” Dream stutters, “sorry, didn’t-”

“It’s fine, you can write it,” George chuckles, lightly nudging his shoulder.

“You’re left-handed,” Dream points out as he fills in the squares, stomach twisting.

“I am.”

“Aren’t most serial killers left-handed?” he blurts, wanting to slam his head against the lunch table the second he says it. *What’s wrong with you?* Dream flushes deep red when George laughs loudly, giggling and wheezing like he’s on the verge of tears.

“Yeah,” he says breathlessly, wiping his eyes and hiccuping softly. “Watch your back, Dream.”

“Okay,” Dream replies, going numb as he drowns in pools of warm honey.

Dream’s friends wonder why he doesn’t sit with them at lunch anymore. He doesn’t have an explanation.

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Dream fishes his bike out of the shed and hoses down cobwebs and years of dust, adjusting the seat to accommodate his summer growth spurt. He rides down the very next morning, in the general direction of where he *assumes* George lives, aimlessly stalling in the street until a garage door opens.

“Dream?” George calls.

“Uh, hi, good morning,” Dream flounders, grinning sheepishly as George walks his bike down the driveway.

“What’re you doing?” he asks with a knowing smile.

“Um, I bike now.”

“Thought you didn’t know shit about bikes.”

“Doesn’t mean I can’t ride one.”

“Fair enough. Let’s go,” George says, hoisting himself onto the seat. Dream watches his legs swing and blushes furiously.

They race to school, through back streets and hilly streets and bumpy streets and curved streets, through fruit trees and parks, quiet neighborhoods and busy intersections. George rises from his seat again, letting the wind consume him as they hurtle downhill.

The bell rings as they roll into school. George locks his bike, looking expectantly at Dream.

“U-lock?” he grins.

Dream shakes his head. “Don’t feel like locking it,” he murmurs, savoring the way George pants with exertion, rosy-cheeked and windswept.

“Suit yourself.”

They walk to AP Lit in their usual silence.

Dream’s mom asks why he doesn’t drive anymore. He doesn’t have an explanation.

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Preseason ends. Dream is perpetually tired, perpetually irritated. Late practices prevent him from

cycling home with George. Carrying conversations with his friends becomes hard, and Sapnap can't seem to stop throwing him these irritating worried glances. Dream realizes he prefers George's comfortable silence to the aggressive rowdiness of his teammates. He prefers gentle brushes, prefers sparkling brown eyes, prefers easygoing smiles.

School becomes a chore, Football devolves into a constant source of headaches and compounding frustration. Even with George, the days seem to bleed into each other, creating one long mindless vacuum of *normalcy*.

His coach pulls him aside after practice one day to talk about recruitment.

"Son," he rumbles, "we've had calls from college scouts for you. It's late in the game, but I've invited them to come watch a few of our games leading up to the championship. If they like you, we'll set up meetings."

"Okay, coach," Dream replies tiredly. "What do I need to do?"

"Train hard, winning would be preferable. But remember, they're looking at *you*. Not the team."

"Got it."

Dream bikes home as the sun sets over the horizon, feeling a strange emptiness settle over his heart.

The season starts, and Dream continues to feel alone. He looks for George in the stands during halftime, but he's never there. Their conversations are limited to early morning bike rides and passing comments in the halls, small talk over crossword puzzles at lunch and nods of acknowledgment when George bikes past football practice on his way home. It's not a friendship, at least Dream doesn't think it is. George seems to merely tolerate him, seems to much prefer solitude to Dream's rowdy, overbearing presence. The Age of Innocence seems to drag on impossibly. Dream hates all the characters, hates his Lit class, hates that George won't see him as anything more than a passing acquaintance.

And then, shit hits the fan.

They lose a game. He watches the scouts shake their heads in disappointment and murmur to coach as the bleachers are vacated.

Sapnap breaks his nose during the game. The blood spatters onto Dream's arm and he looks for far too long, watching it track down his skin when a linebacker rams into him. Bruised rib, the doctor says. Should rest for a month. He ices it and gets back to playing.

It starts getting dark at five P.M. and it makes Dream's brain feel cloudy and broken. He can't concentrate on college applications, can't concentrate on homework, can't *think*.

He fails a math test. His teacher pulls him aside and says, "*you're better than this.*" It makes his skin crawl.

His parents start fighting. He can't figure out why.

George seems bright as ever, wearing the same glowing smile every morning, screaming with joy as they race downhill. He starts donning a blue beanie and matching scarf to combat the cold and stops wearing shorts. Dream misses his scraped knees. He wonders if George knows how he feels, wonders if George is torturing him on purpose, allowing his presence to be just mysterious enough, just fleeting enough to leave Dream wanting so much *more*.

Another hellish week comes to a close, and Dream finds himself sitting on the picnic tables at the park near his house, smoking his dad's cigarettes on a Friday night. It's mostly dark, wisps of reddened sunset still gracing the horizon. He blows the clouds of smoke into the air, letting them mix with the chilly wind and twist away.

"Dream!" George calls, feet crunching softly against the dampened leaves.

Dream waves his hands frantically, trying to dispel some of the smoke before he turns around, offering George a small smile as he draws closer.

"Hi," Dream murmurs, "why're you out here?"

"Biking," George says simply, taking a seat atop the picnic table. Dream sucks in a sharp breath, noticing how George's freckled cheeks are bitten pink by the cold, cotton candy clouds blooming on milky skin. He looks up with watery eyes, stung by the nipping air, and suppresses a laugh when he notices the cigarette in Dream's hand.

"You smoke?" he asks casually.

"When I'm stressed," Dream replies, feeling strangely shameful. "They're my dad's."

George nods, rubbing at his reddened nose with a sweatshirt sleeve. It's mesmerizing. "Give me one," he commands, shoving an outstretched hand towards Dream.

Dream places the pack into his palm trembling hands, and George fishes around in his backpack until he produces a dark blue lighter.

George tips a cigarette out onto his hand, gently placing it between his lips. Dream's head spins, his arms shake, his chest feels like it's burning. He convinces himself it's from the cold. George lights the cig, taking a drag and exhaling a massive cloud of smoke in one long breath.

"These are gross," he announces, snuffing it out on the table.

Dream laughs, dropping his cigarette to the ground and crushing it under his toe. "I know."

"Why are you stressed?"

Dream sighs, stretching his legs and looking at the gentle scattering of stars beginning to appear. "You're gonna laugh," he says.

"I will *not*," George insists, turning towards him. "Tell me."

"We lost our game," Dream mutters. "I'm trying to get recruited and- um- it just doesn't look that good for my stats."

George nods solemnly, patting him on the back with icy fingers that Dream swears he can feel through the thick material of his jacket. "You tried your best," he offers.

"You weren't even there."

"You always try your best," George insists. "And don't argue."

"Okay," Dream says, feeling himself fall, fall, fall. He lets himself go. He accepts the gravity, welcomes the bone-crush. He lets himself fall. And it's fucking glorious.

George pulls off his beanie, running a hand through his mussed hair. "This weather sucks," he

comments, scooting closer to Dream. “Fucking freezing all the time. And dark.”

“Yeah,” Dream mumbles, exercising every ounce of self-control in his body, commanding himself to not wrap an arm around George.

“Depressing, innit?”

“It’s just-” Dream starts, feeling the words tumble out involuntarily, “like, there’s so much shit to do. I don’t know. I feel like I’m doing shit without a real end goal. I’m just doing it because other people are telling me to do it.”

“Like what?” George murmurs, looking up to Dream.

“Dunno. Recruitment. School is getting hard. I- I’m not bragging or anything but, like, school’s *never* been hard. And my fucking college apps are fucking garbage,” he spits, growing strangely angry.

“Oh,” George tenses. “Well, I can’t say I know shit about American football, but, uh, things pass, y’know? This shit, it’s normal. It’ll pass. Most things do. And, um, if you feel like you’re not working towards a goal, you’re fucking stupid, Dream, because you have a whole life ahead of you. And nobody will give a single fuck about a high school football game, or even how you did in high school. You want a goal? Life’s your goal.”

Dream nods, and the customary easy grin drops from George’s face, leaving him looking thoughtful, almost melancholy.

“Sorry,” Dream says dazedly, cursing himself for making George look like *that*. “Sorry. You’re right. It’s just- stressful. I guess it’ll all be over soon.”

George sighs, reaching out and patting Dream’s leg gently. “Do you want to come over?” he says after a moment.

“Wh- like- what?” Dream stutters.

“We eat lunch together, we bike to school together, uh- I don’t know- we walk to class together- um- we’re friends? So I wanted you to come-” George stumbles, gesturing randomly with his hands. “I- okay, just forget it,” he sighs, standing up and dusting himself off.

“No!” Dream shouts, scrambling to his feet. “Sorry. No. Yes. I mean- yes. I’ll come over.”

George grins up at him, pulling his beanie back on. “Cool.”

They bike to George’s house. It feels different at night, much colder, much more thrilling. The wind hurts but in the best way possible. George shrieks when they roll downhill, like he always does. Dream laughs openly, like he always does.

“My mum’s not home,” George murmurs when they step inside, defrosting frozen fingers and limbs. “Working late, I think. You want food?”

Dream nods, taking in the sleek decor, the hundreds of framed pictures featuring baby George, toddler George, ten-year-old George. George in front of the Big Ben, George with a man that looks exactly like him. George with a little blonde girl, hugging his leg. Dream’s heart swells.

“Is that your dad?” he asks.

“Yeah,” George says softly. “He’s overseas right now. Fucking stupid, innit? They make us move to America and *still* send him away.”

“Where’s your sister?” Dream murmurs.

“At her friend’s, I think. I don’t really know what fourteen-year-old girls do. But, uh, we have the house to ourselves.”

“Cool,” Dream says, trying to still his thudding heart.

They make pasta, spaghetti with grocery-store marinara sauce. Dream watches the boiling water while George rummages through the pantry, producing a box of brownie mix.

“Wanna bake this?” he giggles, and Dream feels like he’s in heaven.

They eat quickly, talking about AP Lit, football, college applications, mundane things that normally make Dream’s palms itch. Instead, he savors the way George’s brow furrows when he talks about what he’s going to major in—computer science, but he likes English, too—savors the way his eyes squint when he smiles, showing all his teeth and curling into himself like a shy child.

After dinner, George sits on the counter, “supervising”, as he puts it, while Dream cracks eggs and measures out oil and water, whisking the brownie mix fervently. Dream watches long legs kick back and forth, socks thudding against the dark cabinets, and wants to press himself between those legs and-

“Dream!”

“Huh- what?” he scrambles, snapping out of his reverie.

“You’re *spilling*.”

Surely enough, Dream looks down at his hand, finding a giant glob of brownie mix slowly tracking down his fingers.

“Shit- shit! Uh, napkin?” he flounders, but George grabs his hand, raising it to his mouth and- *holy fuck*.

He wraps his lips around Dream’s fingers, licking off the brownie batter before handing him a paper towel with a self-satisfied grin. “I didn’t want to waste it,” he giggles.

Dream goes beet-red. “Yeah, uh-huh,” he manages, feeling his pants tighten as he scrubs at his fingers with the paper towel. “Thanks.”

“I think we can pop it in the oven now,” George says, gesturing to a baking dish. Dream turns away, hastily pouring the mix into the dish and shoving it in the oven. He hands the bowl to George, who stares into it for a long moment, then dips his fingers in and begins to lick up the remaining brownie batter.

Dream feels like he’s going to collapse.

“Take some!” George says, holding the bowl out.

Dream dips a cautious finger in, raising it to his lips. “Yum,” he deadpans, and George bursts into peals of uncontrollable laughter, placing the bowl in the sink. They wait at the dining table, continuing their discussion as Dream hopelessly tries to focus on George’s words, rather than the

feeling of his mouth, warm and wet and inviting and *right there*, full pink lips curling into soft smiles and wide grins alike.

The oven beeps. They eat straight out of the baking dish. George groans and moans with delight when the chocolate hits his tongue, and Dream wonders if the universe is playing a joke on him.

“Do you want to um- come upstairs?” George offers when they clear half the pan.

Dream stiffens. “Uh- yeah. Sure.”

George’s room is painted light blue, and Dream laughs quietly, endeared by the heaps of newspapers piled upon his desk, all flipped to the crossword section. The walls are filled with pictures—George in his old school uniform, playing cricket, out with friends, cuddled up next to a small kitten. Dream traces his hand along the posters and pictures, wondering how he got so fucking lucky, wondering why George chose *him*, of all people.

George flops down onto the bed, pulling out his laptop. “Wanna watch a movie?”

Dream shifts from side to side and stares at George with uncertainty. “Um- okay.”

“Sit down,” George insists, patting the bed next to him.

They sit a few inches apart, laptop resting between them as George selects a movie. “Harry Potter,” he announces.

He puts on the first movie, and it makes Dream miss warm nights by the fireplace when he was a kid, curled up between his sisters, marathoning Harry Potter movies until their parents carried them upstairs. It’s strange, the dazed ache of nostalgia blending with anxious feelings of limitless possibility. Well, limitless if he could maybe scoot a little closer, maybe stop holding his breath, *maybe* try to act like a normal human being around George, who seems utterly engrossed in the movie, utterly unaware of Dream’s pounding heart and tingling skin.

Minutes pass, and Dream’s neck begins growing stiff from the awkward position he’s in—back pin-straight against the headboard, staring straight ahead, barely looking at the screen.

But suddenly, Dream’s half-convinced George is reading his mind, because he picks up the laptop, placing it on his lap, and scoots closer so their shoulders touch. Dream sucks in a sharp breath and holds it, feeling his ears turn pink as George tugs a blanket up around their legs.

They stay like that, shoulders pressed up against one another as the movie finishes. George yawns, giving Dream a sleepy smile, puts on the next film, and promptly falls asleep. When Dream finally notices, he leans over to flick the lamp off and closes the laptop, bleary-eyes tracking the rise and fall of George’s thin chest. He leans back, letting his head hit the pillow, and George curls into him. It’s not cuddling, Dream knows that, but it’s enough to make his heart race and his palms sweat, enough to make his infatuation hurt ten times harder—it stabs him in the gut and twists the blade—gentle whispers of what could be.

*He doesn’t like you like that, idiot.*

Dream wonders if George does this with all of his friends, or if he’s special, the only one invited inside, the only one allowed to see George at his most vulnerable—eyelashes fluttering with each breath, lips slightly parted as he drifts off.

He wonders if it means as much to George as it does to him.

Dream falls asleep soon after, heart twisting with uninhibited want, mind coursing with desperate need.

He wakes up with George still next to him, breathing slowly as light streams through the window and dusts across his face, creating dancing patterns across freckled cheeks.

“George,” Dream murmurs, shaking him softly.

“Mmmph,” George groans, rolling to face Dream and rubbing his eyes. “Time’s it?”

“Uh, nine, I think. I have to get home- my mom’s probably wondering where I am.”

“Oh, yeah. Wait, uh, give me your phone.”

“Huh?”

“Give your phone,” George demands, stretching his arm out.

Dream drops his phone into George’s hand, watching as he types in his number and takes a picture of himself—eyes bugged out, smiling widely.

“Now we can text,” George says. “Let yourself out.”

“Okay,” Dream says, walking to the door numbly. “Thank you for- um-”

“Bye,” George huffs playfully, rolling over and shutting his eyes, buried in a mountain of blankets.

Dream texts him a few hours after he gets home, spinning in his desk chair and staring at a blank email he’s supposed to send to a recruiter.

*hi.* He types, reading the two letters a hundred times before pressing send.

*hello,* comes the quick response.

*sap's throwing a party next saturday. do you maybe wanna come?*

*party?*

*yeah, no pressure. idk if you're into all that. it's the day after our championship game,* Dream sends, frantically backtracking. After a minute of silence, he types out another text.

*i'll either get sad drunk or happy drunk, depending on the outcome.*

*that sounds promising,* George replies. Dream’s heart skips a beat.

He sends the address with shaking fingers, watching three dots pop up and glare at him teasingly for an agonizing minute, then disappear. *Whatever.* He locks his phone and throws it on the bed, desperately trying to stop fantasizing about George dancing at a house party, drunk out of his mind. Dream wonders if George dances like he bikes—carefree, pure sunshine, filled to the brim with unbridled joy.

They’re friends now. Real, true friends. Their walks aren’t silent anymore, although Dream doesn’t mind when they are. He likes the way George’s sneakers scuff the pavement when he walks, likes the way George yells at him when he fucks up the crossword, likes the way people look at them, leaving them to exist in their own little world.

Dream pushes through. *It'll pass. Most things do.* He tries his best. He doesn't smoke in the park anymore. He writes college essays like his life depends on it, and studies harder than he's ever studied before. For himself, and okay, fine, maybe so he'll feel worthy of George. Feel like he deserves George's friendship, his time, his secret glances across the room in AP Lit. George hurtles through life like he hurtles downhill. He passes through phases like he's passed through cities. He's quiet yet so fucking loud at the same time. He barely speaks yet Dream hears him constantly. Understands him always.

George texts him persistently. Pictures of his cat. Pictures of birds outside his window. A soccer ball with a crudely drawn face. The burnt sausage he cooked for breakfast. "*It tastes fine!*" he insists. Dream just laughs, crafting witty replies despite his thudding heart.

George is crosswords and fruit trees and the strange time between fall and winter when time seems to move fast and slow all at once. He's late nights in the park and early mornings at school. He's scabbed knees and easy smiles and good advice. He's read *The Age of Innocence* a hundred times, he speaks deliberately, he works hard—his college applications are done and sent off before Dream's even halfway through his own. He tells Dream his secrets, his favorite color, that he likes apple juice more than orange. They agree to disagree on that one. He tells Dream about the flight from London to Boston, how they landed in the airport and he had a strange urge to turn around and *run*—get back on the plane and fly home to his friends, his old school, his old house that was covered in vines and had a small vegetable garden. He says that he doesn't miss home, just misses the familiarity. He tells Dream, late one night when secrets spill out almost involuntarily, that after he moved, he vowed that he'd never let himself get too attached to a place ever again. No more familiarity.

Dream hopes that rule doesn't apply to people, hopes he isn't just another phase—he cherishes George and prays that George cherishes him, even though he might not deserve it.

Dream tells George about his parents fighting. He tells him about the championship game and his fears of not getting recruited. George just sighs, assuring him that it'll pass. All parents fight, he says, even the ones that really love each other. You're talented, he assures. Don't worry, he insists. Dream believes him, because why wouldn't he?

He decides he's infatuated. It's puppy love, he convinces himself, not wanting to admit the truth. George doesn't feel the same. George deserves better. It's just puppy love.

---

They win the championships. Dream rips his helmet off and launches himself onto Sapnap, near tears as the crowds cheer deafeningly. Sapnap and Dream roll around in the grass like children, dumping cups of water on their faces and screaming their throats raw. Luke and Sam pile on top of them, and Dream feels breathless in the best way, the culmination of early mornings and late evenings, perpetual soreness and eternally strained muscles finally, *finally* coming to fruition.

When they finally rise from the field, Dream's eyes catch something, a flash of blue. He's there, leaning against the side of the bleachers, grinning madly and exhaling clouds of cold air through his peach-dusted nose. Dream pushes past his coach, his team, his screaming friends, making a beeline directly for George and capturing him in a bruising hug, knocking the wind out of him with a soft *oof*. Dream twirls him around, and they end up behind the bleachers, still locked in a tight embrace, laughing in each other's ears.

"You're sweaty," George complains after a moment.

Dream releases him with a shy smile. "Sorry."

“Shut up,” he says breathlessly. “That was the best fucking thing I’ve ever seen.”

“Thank you,” Dream beams. “You watched?”

George nods. “I’ve never watched a football game. This was my first one. Fuck, it was *really* good. You run fast.”

“I took your football virginity,” Dream teases, ruffling George’s hair.

He wrinkles his nose, swatting Dream’s hand away. “You’re- you’re so-”

Dream laughs loudly, running his hands through his damp hair as George flushes deep red. “I’m glad you watched. Thank you for watching.”

“Course,” George says. “You aren’t cold?”

“Not that cold. Running kept me warm. Now you can keep me warm.”

George rolls his eyes. “Oh, shut *up*, Dream,” he huffs, pushing against his shoulder. As if struck by lightning, Dream quickly catches George’s gloved hand, pulling him closer.

“Lemme go,” George giggles, squirming as Dream’s free hand meets his waist. His back collides with the cool metal of the bleachers with a soft thud.

“What’s the matter, Georgie?” Dream says, drawing even closer, riding the high of victory and raw adrenaline.

“Nothing,” George murmurs, tipping his head up, chapped lips inches from Dream’s face, beckoning him, inviting him in.

They stay like that, cold breaths mixing in a cloud as Dream’s chest heaves. The adrenaline hasn’t subsided yet, and he wants to close the gap, *yearns* to feel George’s lips against his.

George does it for him. He kisses Dream, kisses him hard. It’s slow and loving but *firm*, like he means it. Dream kisses back, and kisses, and kisses some more, licking into George’s mouth, pressing him up against the cool metal of the bleachers. It turns dirty. George brings his hands up to grasp at the hair curling around Dream’s neck, groaning softly when Dream bites down on his lip.

George pulls back first, grinning up at Dream and panting softly through spit-slick lips. “Good job today,” he says. “I’ll see you at Sap’s.”

He climbs on his bike and rides away without a backward glance, leaving Dream under the bleachers, gingerly prodding at his swollen lips, trying to discern if he’d been hallucinating.

George’s texts stop. He doesn’t text him all Friday night or Saturday morning, and Dream gives up all hope of their friendship continuing. He cries in the shower while getting ready for the party, leaving him scrubbing at bleary, bloodshot eyes as he drives down to Sapnap’s house.

Dream sits on the sofa, mindlessly sipping from an overflowing solo cup, trying to drown his sorrows in cheap liquor when George walks through the door with wind-kissed skin and gently tousled hair. *He biked!* Dream thinks, taking a moment to watch George fumble around before rising from his seat.

“Hi,” Dream says, sidling up to him. *Why did you kiss me? Can we kiss again? Are we still*

*friends?*

George peels his coat off to reveal another giant hoodie. He looks warm. Huggable. “Hello.”

“You came,” Dream says carefully.

“Why wouldn’t I?”

Dream’s mouth goes dry when George looks up at him with genuine confusion, all wide-eyed and innocent. He resolves to swivel the conversation away from whatever happened under the bleachers, knowing if they had that dreaded *talk*, even attempting to broach the subject, George would surely end their friendship. *It was a mistake. He doesn’t like you like that.*

*But then why did he kiss me?*

“Supreme?” Dream asks teasingly, cutting the awkward silence by gesturing to George’s hoodie.

“I-” George flushes, “I used to buy hype stuff.”

“Oh,” Dream chuckles, “you’re one of *those*.”

George shakes his head with a scoff. “Stop ogling. Get me a fucking drink.”

Dream turns bright red, and in a flash of confidence, grabs George’s hand, making a beeline for the white claws and vodka bottles strewn around the kitchen island. George’s fingers are shockingly cold, and Dream lets out a little sigh when they hesitantly curl around his hand, gripping back twice as hard.

He releases George after a beat, gesturing to the alcohol. “Take your pick.”

George picks up a white claw, cracking it open and taking a long sip. “This tastes like juice,” he comments, giggling softly. “Americans are so soft.”

“Dance with me,” Dream rushes suddenly, words laced with fruit-flavored vodka and drunken confidence.

“No.”

“Come on, George.”

“I don’t dance.”

Dream sighs, grabbing George’s hand. “Come *on*,” he pleads, dragging George to the mass of people bouncing and swaying drunkenly as music blares through the speakers. Dream’s drunk. His head spins and his legs feel like jelly, but it’s fine, because George is there and everything is just George, George, *George*.

George watches him jump around, a head taller than everyone else, and lets out a gentle laugh, shaking his head as Dream starts singing.

*Put your hands to the constellations, the way you look should be a sin, you my sensation.*

Dream grabs George and pulls him close. They sway against each other throughout the whole song, closer than friends, not nearly close enough to be anything more than friends. George stares up at him with wonder, almost daring Dream to push it further, push him to his breaking point. Dream dips his head down and sings in George’s ear, hot breath fanning over pale skin.

*We ain't married, but tonight I need some consummation.*

George shivers against Dream, painfully aware of strong hands gripping him close. Dream feels like he's floating, floating with George—two people alone in a room full of bodies, impossibly bonded, tied together with a fragile string.

The air between them seems strangely hot, strangely suffocating, but in the best fucking way. Dream's cheeks burn when George sighs softly, looking up through long eyelashes.

But, then again, tenuous bonds break as quickly as they're formed. George tugs Dream down with trembling hands, allowing him to get a whiff of green apple and rain, saying, "I think she's looking at you."

Dream's heart drops.

"Who?" he says, passing off the heartbreak, the gentle, saccharine rejection with a weak smile.

"Her," George gulps, tipping his head towards a group of girls clustered in the corner of the room, eyeing Dream up. "You should go talk to her."

"Yeah, okay," Dream says, wanting to curl up in a ball and die, run away, be anywhere but pressed up against George and his nonchalant, dismissive smiles.

He talks to the girls. It's fine. It's nice. It's not George. Dream turns around after the conversation and George is gone, disappeared along with his bike.

Dream wakes up the next morning, sprawled across Sappnap's sofa with a killer hangover, and misses George.

He drives home, drives through back streets and hilly streets and bumpy streets and curved streets, through fruit trees and parks, quiet neighborhoods and busy intersections, and misses George.

School starts again the next week, and George pretends like everything's fine, so Dream pretends like everything's fine, pretends like the kiss only existed for a few moments of bliss, tucked away behind the bleachers, pretends like the dancing was a drunken mishap. Pretends, pretends, pretends. It's fine. They're fine.

---

Christmas brings snow. It's a miracle, everyone says. Dream's sisters press their noses to the window and make patterns in the frost. Christmas eve is warm, it's happy, it's celebratory. College scouts email to set up meetings. He sends off a few applications. His father pours far too many glasses of champagne, and they all end up wine-drunk, falling into bed before ten P.M. Dream wakes up the next morning to the doorbell frantically ringing, and stumbles down the stairs in a t-shirt and boxers, wrenching the door open to find-

*Oh.*

George stands before him in his usual getup, bundled up under what seems to be hundreds of layers of fleece.

"Merry Christmas!" he yells, thrusting a small box into Dream's hands.

"You got me a Christmas gift," Dream says sleepily, barely registering anything except the fucking *angel* standing on his doorstep.

“It’s nothing. Just- was in the shop and thought of you.”

“You thought of me.”

“Fucking open it, Dream,” George says, rolling his eyes.

“Alright, alright.”

He rips off the wrapping paper gracelessly, prying open the box to find a strange metal contraption. Dream blinks at it a few times before looking back to George.

“It’s a U-lock!” George exclaims, beaming widely. “Because you refuse to lock your bike and that’s just *highly* irresponsible.”

*Am I dreaming?*

“God, George, *thank you*. I feel awful, I didn’t get you anyth-”

“Shut up. It’s fine,” George interrupts, wrapping his arms around himself. “Seriously, just enjoy it.”

“I will,” Dream says, feeling his heart swell. “Thank you.”

“Dream, honey, what on Earth *are* you doing, close the door- Oh!” his mother exclaims, bounding down the stairs in a patterned robe.

*Here we go.*

“Who’s this?” she asks, smiling at George.

He gives her a small wave, tossing a playful glance to Dream before answering. “I’m George.”

“Well, Merry Christmas, George,” she says cheerfully. “Come inside, I don’t know where Dream’s manners have gone.”

“Oh, no, I really should be-”

“We have hot chocolate,” she offers, raising her eyebrows. “Would you like some?”

George visibly brightens. “I’d love some,” he says, stepping past the threshold.

Dream is frozen in place, eyes passing from George to his mother, who takes the boy by the arm and leads him to the kitchen, launching into a long spiel about why hot chocolate made with water isn’t *truly* hot chocolate. He shuts the door with a gentle click, setting down his present and walking into the kitchen where George’s already made himself at home—coat, hat, and scarf slung over a dining chair. Dream sits down across from him, silently listening as George makes easy small talk, explaining his move, his father’s job, all the places he’s traveled.

Two steaming cups of hot chocolate are placed down before them, and George immediately begins gulping down the hot liquid, apparently unfazed by the temperature.

“Dream, honey, I’m going to check on your sisters,” his mother says, patting his shoulder. “Nice to meet you, George. Come have dinner sometime.”

“Thank you! I’d like that,” George replies. “The hot chocolate was good.”

“I’m glad,” she says, disappearing up the stairs.

“Your mom’s nice,” George states after a long moment.

“Thanks,” Dream mutters, sipping at his drink.

George leaves shortly after, playfully ruffling Dream’s hair and placing his cup in the sink. Dream shuts the door behind him and sinks to the floor, sitting down next to the Christmas tree—beautifully dumbfounded and very much in love.

---

Spring begins to sweep through, melting the icy frost as fruit trees start to bloom again. Dream gets his football scholarship. George gets into a college ten minutes away. They scream and holler and fall into each other’s arms, laughing until their voices grow hoarse.

“Dream!” George hiccups once the hysterics are over.

“George!” Dream replies, eyes shining.

“We’re going to fucking college. *Together.*”

“We sure are,” Dream says, enveloping George in another bone-crushing hug.

They share a bed for the second time that night, and Dream wakes up with George’s head on his chest. He reaches up gingerly and plays with George’s hair. It’s soft, softer than he’d expected, curling around his fingers and almost begging him to stay.

He wonders if, in another life, George would wake him up with sleepy kisses and loving whispers. He wonders if, in another life, George would have stayed at Sapnap’s party—waiting for him, fighting for him, wanting him.

---

Sapnap realizes Dream’s in love with George a few days following their college acceptances. It’s after dinner at Dream’s house, and they’re sitting shoulder-to-shoulder on his bedroom floor, playing Call of Duty when Sapnap suddenly pauses the game and turns to face him.

“George,” he says.

Dream chokes on his own spit. “George,” he repeats, averting his eyes from Sapnap’s knowing stare.

“What’s up with you guys?”

“Uh- uh, nothing. Nothing. Just, y’know. Friends. He’s nice. We’re in- uh- Lit together,” Dream stutters out, scratching raw nails against the carpet.

“Yeah, I’m in that class, too,” Sapnap chuckles. He takes a swig of coke and nudges Dream softly. “Friends?” he asks, smiling softly.

“Yeah,” Dream says. “I mean, he made it pretty clear he didn’t want anything more,” he mutters to no one in particular.

“So you do like him!” Sapnap exclaims. “Sam owes me ten dollars.”

“What?” Dream exclaims. “Does everyone-”

Sapnap shakes his head, letting out a crazed laugh. “Nah, dude. Just me, Sam, and Luke saw you run to him after championships. And then at the party, you guys were like- I don’t know. *Grinding*

on each other.”

“We were *not* grinding!” Dream yells. “He’s my friend. We’re friends. I- I’m not gay, man.”

“I didn’t say you were gay. I said you like George,” Sapnap retorts. “He probably likes you back, you know.”

“Sapnap, drop it,” Dream warns, fiddling with the controller.

“No, seriously, what guy *grinds* against his best friend and then just- lets it go?” Sapnap wheezes.

“We weren’t fucking grinding! I- he told me to go talk to some girls at the party, he doesn’t want me like that. It’s dumb, Sapnap, *please* just drop it.”

Sapnap sobers up, looking at Dream with a cautious expression. “He told you to talk to girls?”

Dream nods slowly, taking a sip of his soda. “Yeah, uh, after we danced he told me that some girls were looking at me and I should go talk to them, and that was fucking weird because the day before he-”

The words spill out involuntarily, hammering against Dream’s heart and bursting free against his will.

“He what?” Sapnap murmurs.

“He, um- fuck, dude. Just- uh- don’t tell people about this, okay?”

“Yeah, yeah, Dream, don’t worry about it. What’d he do?”

“He *kissed* me,” Dream hisses. “He kissed me behind the bleachers. And it was like, kind of a make-out? But then we didn’t talk about it after Like- I don’t know- he just pretended it never happened.”

“Tongue?” Sapnap questions earnestly.

Dream nods feverishly. “Tongue,” he confirms.

“Then what the fuck are you waiting for? Text him! Tell him you love him! Fuck—Dream, I don’t think you see yourself when you’re around him. You like- bounce off each other in this crazy way. Just- you two together- it’s *sweet*,” Sapnap rambles, stumbling over words. “Luke, Sam, and I’ve all noticed. Dude likes you back.”

“Really?” Dream whispers.

“He stares at you. He talks to you and doesn’t really talk to anyone else. He lets you do crosswords with him even though you fucking *suck* at crosswords.”

Dream’s heart flutters.

“And,” Sapnap continues, “if he asked you to talk to those girls, he probably was scared that you didn’t bring up the kiss.”

“But he didn’t bring it up!” Dream cries.

“He initiated it! You can’t expect him to do all the work!” Sapnap replies, chuckling like it’s the most obvious thing in the world. “Ask him to prom or something, I don’t know.”

“Dude,” Dream groans, swatting at Sapnap's arm. “He’s probably not even going.”

---

Senior prom very quickly becomes a reality. Dream asks the girl from the party, too scared to broach the subject with George, who continues the fucking *pretending*, acting like nothing happened, acting like they’re fine. George insists he isn’t going, but then a girl from his math class asks him and he doesn't know how to say no. Dream ends up driving all of them, including Sapnap and his date, desperately trying to focus on the music, the road, the streetlights, anything but George quietly sitting next to him, casually looking so goddamn beautiful.

*Sweet disposition, never too soon. Oh, reckless abandon, like no one's watching you.*

George rolls the window down and sticks his hand out, feeling the wind whip and flow through his fingers. Dream wonders if he’s trying to replicate the feeling of speeding downhill on a bike, wonders if it feels the same.

He tries it. It doesn’t.

George ignores Dream throughout the dance, nodding blankly when his date talks to him, sitting on a chair beside the buffet and staring forlornly out onto the dance floor.

There’s a slow song, and Dream wraps his arms around his date’s waist. George does the same, but his date presses her head to his chest in a way that makes Dream’s hands shake. He swears George is looking at him, brown eyes calling out to him, reflecting every colored flash of light, but it’s far too dark to tell.

The girls congregate to take pictures, and Dream’s left in a corner with Sapnap, tracking George’s movements like a hawk.

“He’s just *sitting there*,” Sapnap hisses, elbowing Dream. “Go talk to him.”

“He’s been ignoring me the whole day!” Dream whisper-screams. “He doesn’t want to talk.”

“Go,” Sapnap commands, giving him a shove.

Dream stumbles up to George, offering him a quiet hello.

“Hi,” George murmurs, looking up at Dream with a sullen expression.

“What’s wrong?” Dream asks, drawing closer.

“Dunno,” George sighs. “Dances aren’t my thing, I guess.”

“Wanna go somewhere quieter?” Dream offers, fingers itching to ruffle George’s hair.

George smiles demurely. “Yeah, okay.”

Dream finds a stairwell door and they climb up seven flights of stairs, heaving and panting as they emerge onto the roof of the building.

“Nice,” George comments, looking out onto the city skyline.

Dream nods, sitting on a raised air vent. George plops down next to him, shivering slightly.

“You okay?” Dream asks gently.

“Why do you talk to me like that?” George demands, face growing red with an anger Dream’s never seen in him.

“Like what?” Dream whispers, feeling his heart curl in upon itself.

George wraps his arms around himself petulantly, swinging his feet against the air vent with a sharp *clang*. “Like I’m a fragile child who’s going to throw a tantrum.”

“Because!” Dream cries. “You’ve been completely silent this entire evening! You haven’t said one word to me. I don’t know if I offended you in some way, and I’m sorry if I did but-”

“Well,” George huffs, “I’ve been trying to pay attention to my *date*. Just like you’ve turned all your attention to your date. I don’t even think you noticed I was in the fucking car!”

“What the fuck,” Dream spits, “I literally tried to talk to you in the car. You ignored me. What the fuck, dude. I noticed you, I always notice yo-”

“Shut up,” George demands. “Just stop being so *nice* to me. Stop pretending like this is *fine*.”

“You were the one who pretended first,” Dream says coldly.

George turns towards him, honeyed eyes melted by blazing firestorms. “What the fuck is that supposed to mean?”

His heart drops. “You can’t just- you can’t just run away and ignore me when you’re upset,” Dream spits, desperately trying to change the subject. “You can’t- you can’t treat people like this. I’m not just another *phase* in your life, George. I’m your friend. I’m-”

“Of course you’re my friend,” George insists. “I never said you weren’t. I never said you were a phase, either, so don’t fucking put words in my mouth. I- I’m asking you to tell me what the *fuck* you meant by I pretended first. I didn’t pretend *shit*.”

“You *kissed* me, George!” Dream accuses. “You fucking kissed me and pretended like it never happened. You danced all close to me, you let me hold you like that, and then told me to go talk to a girl!”

“Because I thought you didn’t want me!” George yells, drawing closer. “You- you- you *touched* me. You touched me in a way friends aren’t supposed to touch each other. And I fucking *loved* it. But you stopped texting, *you* ignored *me*, so I told you to go to the girl. And you fucking *went*.”

Dream’s heart soars. *He wants you. He wants you he wants you he wants you.*

“You liked it,” he says slowly.

“Yeah, I fucking did,” George replies breathlessly. Dream watches his ears flush pink as he shifts uncomfortably, smoothing down wrinkled pants with trembling fingers.

“Can I do it again?” Dream asks.

“Please.”

Dream kisses George this time. And it’s fucking incredible. It’s excruciatingly perfect.

George meets him in the middle with the same firm, loving kisses Dream had fantasized about since the day under the bleachers. He kisses with ferocity, with aching want, a little sloppy and desperate and not begging, no, George *demand*s more. Dream kisses slowly, savoring the taste of

cherry soda on George's swollen lips, stubbornly refusing to go fast. He's waited too long, he thinks, too long to let this go to waste.

They pull apart, vibrating with warmth despite the chilly air, and Dream says four blissful words.

"I'm taking you home."

George nods eagerly, lacing their fingers together, and Dream sends Sapnap a quick text to arrange a ride for everyone else, getting an eggplant emoji and a red heart in return.

They pile into Dream's car, and George looks at him mischievously before attacking his lips all over again, sucking and biting and grasping at him like a man possessed, leaving Dream feeling like he feels when they bike downhill, stomach dropping, brain liquefying.

The drive's silent, save for the soft song playing on the radio.

*A moment, a love, a dream aloud.*

George looks at Dream, Dream looks out the window, trying to regain some semblance of composure before they reach home.

*A kiss, a cry, our rights, our wrongs.*

Halfway through, Dream reaches a tentative hand out and places it on George's thigh. George stiffens, then smirks, patting his hand gently.

*A moment, a love, a dream aloud.*

George sighs when Dream pulls into the garage. "Dream," he says quietly, unbuckling his seatbelt.

*A kiss, a cry, our rights, our wrongs.*

"Yeah?" Dream replies, opening the car door as his stomach twists.

"Is anyone home?"

"Um, no, I don't think so," he murmurs, watching a grin explode across George's features.

"Good."

They stumble upstairs, kicking their shoes off at the bottom of the staircase, bounding towards Dream's room. The second the door shuts, George *devours* him, kissing and nipping at Dream's neck through shallow breaths. Dream starts unbuttoning George's shirt with quivering hands, but George stops him with a command.

"Rip it," he breathes. "Rip it down the middle."

Dream rips the shirt, buttons flying everywhere as George giggles with delight. He throws his arms around Dream's neck and connects their lips again, kissing sweetly this time, savoring and memorizing with deliberation. He unbuttons Dream's shirt slowly, placing it delicately over the desk chair, a simple action Dream can't help but obsess over.

They fall into bed and George straddles Dream, grinding and writhing and sucking like his life depends on it, months of pent-up frustration and lust and, okay, *love*, pouring out through his lips and onto Dream's skin. Dream reciprocates twice as hard, making sure George knows his devotion, understands it, remembers it.

Dream sucks a hickey into George's skin. And then another one, and another. *Mine!* his heart cries.

He opens George up carefully, peppering kisses to pale flesh as George sobs with pleasure under him, tugging at blonde curls to anchor himself.

George throws his head back and makes the prettiest, most sinful noises. Dream aches to stay in this position forever, just fucking into George, letting him know how he'd take care of him, how he'd love him, how he'd savor every last gasp and moan.

Dream grips the small of George's back, lets his fingers roam. It's soft. He touches, and touches, and touches some more.

They collapse into each other's arms when it's all over, and Dream hugs George a little too tight, crushing them together like he'd fly away at a sudden noise.

"Are you okay?" he asks softly.

"Yeah. Yeah," George pants. "More than okay. God. Thank you. That was- fuck-" he laughs.

"Hmm," Dream hums. "I'm sorry I yelled at you."

"Shut up," George wheezes. "Just- hug me."

Dream obliges, and George falls asleep in seconds, cuddled into his chest, cold feet pressed up against Dream's warm ones.

"I love you," Dream whispers, stroking George's hair.

"Go to sleep," George mutters.

"Okay," Dream sighs.

"I love you, too."

"Okay."

---

Summer comes. They graduate. They kiss lazily in the park by the river and drink grocery-store wine under the stars. Dream's dad shakes George's hand at graduation and offers to teach him how to fish. George's mom bakes cupcakes with football-shaped sprinkles. George wants to travel. They go to Italy. They live in a shitty hostel. "*It's charming!*" George insists. They learn how to make gelato and whisper shaky love confessions and ride rickety cycles through cobbled streets.

And Dream is still obsessed with a boy on a bike.

## End Notes

song is sweet disposition by the temper trap.

this fic is a sort of love letter to my high school experience, even though it really sucked at times.

i texted my friends and asked them the sweet things their high school boyfriends/girlfriends did for them, all the little quirks in their relationships, all the things that made those relationships that much harder to leave behind when they parted ways for college. so that was kind of my inspiration for this, along with my own relationship.

there's something really special about this kind of love, the way it's all-encompassing and obsessive, yet somehow strangely deep and surprisingly strong. idk. it's just a very interesting phase of life.

thank you for reading :)

love from the loglady <3

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!